

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 15, 2010

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 29, 2010

Senate Joint Resolution

No. 23

Introduced by Senator Simitian

(Coauthors: Senators Alquist, Cox, Leno, Negrete McLeod, and Strickland)

February 19, 2010

Senate Joint Resolution No. 23—Relative to research for mitochondrial disease.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 23, as amended, Simitian. Mitochondrial disease: federal support for research.

This measure would urge the President and Congress of the United States to take the action necessary to ~~amend the federal statutes~~ to support research for mitochondrial disease.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Mitochondrial diseases result when there is a defect
2 that reduces the ability of the mitochondria in a cell to produce
3 energy. As mitochondria fail to produce enough energy, the cells
4 will cease to function properly and will eventually die. Organ
5 systems will begin to fail, and the life of the individual is
6 compromised or ended; and
7 WHEREAS, Mitochondria are organelles within most human
8 cells that convert oxygen and calories into the energy the cell needs
9 to power activity and sustain human life. If mitochondria
10 malfunction, there is a lack of cellular energy to perform functions

1 and an accumulation of byproducts that may impair or destroy the
2 cell; and

3 WHEREAS, Mitochondrial diseases are a relatively newly
4 diagnosed group of diseases, first recognized in an adult in the
5 1960s and in the 1980s for pediatric onset cases. Mitochondrial
6 diseases are underdiagnosed and the diagnosis of these diseases
7 is extremely difficult; and

8 WHEREAS, Mitochondrial diseases can present themselves at
9 any age, with associated mortality rates that vary depending upon
10 the particular disease. Mitochondrial diseases generally cause
11 progressive deterioration and weakness. The most severe diseases
12 result in progressive loss of neurological and liver function, and
13 death within several years; and

14 WHEREAS, According to the National Institute of
15 Environmental Health Sciences, half of the individuals affected
16 by a mitochondrial disease are children. When these children show
17 symptoms before age five, approximately 80 percent will not
18 survive beyond age 20. Researchers estimate that one in 4,000
19 children will develop a mitochondrial disease related to an inherited
20 mutation by age 10, and that 1,000 to 2,000 children born annually
21 in the United States will develop a mitochondrial disease in their
22 lifetime; and

23 WHEREAS, There are over 40 mitochondrial diseases, and
24 mitochondrial dysfunction is associated with many disorders
25 including neurological diseases like Parkinson's, Alzheimer's,
26 ALS, and autism, as well as other diseases associated with aging,
27 diabetes, and cancer; and

28 WHEREAS, Mitochondrial diseases are most commonly the
29 result of an inherited or spontaneous genetic mutation, either in
30 the nuclear or mitochondrial DNA. Some mitochondrial diseases
31 have been attributable to environmental factors that interfere with
32 mitochondrial function; and

33 WHEREAS, There is no cure for mitochondrial disease; and

34 WHEREAS, Improving understanding of mitochondrial function
35 and disease has wide potential application to areas of biomedical
36 research. Understanding mitochondrial disease could uncover
37 treatments for a range of serious diseases; and

38 WHEREAS, The United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation has
39 designated the week of February 15 to February 19, 2010, as
40 "CALL TO ACTION" week to encourage support for federal

1 ~~efforts to enact~~ mitochondrial disease research and treatment
2 ~~legislation~~; and

3 WHEREAS, Pursuant to Assembly Concurrent Resolution No.
4 25 (Res. Ch. 15, 2009) the third full week in September in each
5 year the Legislature has proclaimed Mitochondrial Disease
6 Awareness Week, and has urged Californians to observe the week
7 with appropriate activities and programs; now, therefore, be it

8 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*
9 *California, jointly*, That the Legislature of the State of California
10 urges the President and Congress of the United States to take the
11 action necessary to ~~amend the federal statutes to~~ support research
12 for mitochondrial disease; and be it further

13 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
14 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
15 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the
16 Senators and Representatives from California in the Congress of
17 the United States, and to the author of this resolution for
18 appropriate distribution.